

The Lower Mainland Purpose  
Society  
for Youth and Families

**Consumer Handbook**

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to the Purpose Society. This Handbook has been put together to make it easier for you to get the assistance you are looking for. Our staff are committed to working with you and your family to meet your goals. If you have any ideas about how we can improve our service to you, please feel free to talk to us, write us a letter or send us an e-mail. Or you can use the suggestion form at the back of this booklet.

## **The Purpose Society**

The Purpose Society was established in 1983 and has provided social services to thousands of children, youth and families. Currently, we provide the following services or programs:

- Madison Daycare
- Ready Set Grow Daycare for Young Parents
- Cameron Children's Centre
- Yukon Children's Centre
- After school programs
- Family Futures
- Integrated Youth Services
- Youth and Family Caseworkers
- Youth Mentoring Programs
- Newcomer Programs
- Youth Source and free Youth Medical Clinic
- Burnaby Youth Hub
- Purpose Secondary School
- HIV/AIDS Educational, Support Services and Resource Library
- Family Circles
- Food Bags, Showers, and Laundry

Program brochures are available in the lobby of the main building. If you can't find what you are looking for PLEASE ASK us to help you find it.

## **Our Approach**

Purpose staff realize that families and individuals are the experts about their life. We take a client centered approach to our work. Taking a client centered approach means that during the time you receive services from us, your goals come first. We are guided by what you say you want and/or need.

The services that we offer focus on the health, resiliency and resourcefulness of individuals. Services are provided in a safe and respectful environment where diversity, differences and connection to community are valued.

## **The Purpose Offices and Buildings**

The Purpose Society delivers services at a number of different locations. All of the offices are non-smoking. The staff make every attempt to ensure that the offices are clean and safe. If you encounter situations that require some attention, please do not hesitate to inform staff.

## **Hours of Operation**

The main administrative office at 40 Begbie Street is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

While many staff are available during the day, some of the programs take place in the late afternoon or evening. Family workers, counsellors and therapists will make evening appointments for those who are working or otherwise unavailable during the day.

## **The Staff**

The staff of the Purpose Society are committed to providing excellent service. We hire people based on their knowledge, experience and education. All staff agree to policies and procedures and professional codes of ethics to make sure you get the highest standards of professional behaviour and service.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

There are volunteer opportunities available with the Purpose Society and they require a variety of skills. You are invited to speak to the administrative staff if you wish to contribute to the Society.

We ask clients to volunteer in programs other than the one from which they receive service.

## **Confidentiality**

Most things that you tell a counsellor will be kept in confidence. However, the following are some things that cannot be kept confidential.

- We are required to report to the *Ministry of Children and Family Development* if a child is being abused or is seriously at risk.
- If your safety or anyone else's safety is at risk, staff will report the situation to their supervisor.

## **Your Rights and Responsibilities**

As a consumer of the Lower Mainland Purpose Society, you have a right to expect that:

### ***You Will Be Treated With Trust and Respect***

- the work done will be in your best interest
- the work will be based on objectivity and integrity
- you will be treated with dignity and respect
- you will be safe in the place you come for service
- you will not be exploited by employees of the agency
- you will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnic background, language, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, age, abilities, socio-economic status, political affiliation, national ancestry or personal characteristics

### ***You Will Be Served By Competent Staff***

- the employees of the agency are competent
- the employees of the agency participate in ongoing professional development
- the employees of the agency will disclose their educational and professional qualifications if asked
- the employees of the agency will maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- the employees will disclose any reason their practice may be compromised

### ***You and Your Service Provider Will Develop a Service Plan***

- the limits of service will be explained
- the service plan will be developed with you
- the expectations of the service plan will be reviewed with you
- the service plan will be signed by the you
- there will be no opinion, judgment or clinical diagnosis offered unless there has been a documented assessment, observation or diagnosis to support the opinion, judgment or diagnosis

### ***You Will Receive Culturally Appropriate Service***

- ethnic backgrounds and cultures will be respected
- services will be offered in the your first language if possible
- in the event, your first language is not spoken by any employee of the agency and an interpreter is not available, we will refer you to another agency that can provide this service

### ***Your Confidentiality Will Be Respected***

- the limits of confidentiality will be explained to you
- confidentiality will be maintained except as required by local legislation or when someone's safety is an issue
- no information is given or received from others without your explicit consent except where required by law
- you will have access to your files according to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- your file will contain only necessary and relevant information based on
- observation or fact

**As a consumer of the Lower Mainland Purpose Society, you are responsible for:**

#### ***Receiving Service***

- playing an active role in developing your service plan
- sharing facts and conditions that will affect the effectiveness of service
- being available for service and keeping appointments or notifying the agency if you are unavailable
- fully participating in the service during appointments

#### ***Respect and Commitment***

- acting in a respectful way to staff and others
- being free of the influence of nonprescription drugs, illicit drugs and/or alcohol when you accept service
- being clear about what you wish to accomplish through the service
- being open with the service provider about what is helpful or not helpful
- fulfilling conditions of the service contract

### **Consumer's Participating in Group Services**

A number of programs include a group service format. Prior to joining a group service, the group leader will explain the rules of the group to you as well as how the group will be run. Confidentiality for group members is expected. Group members must not tell anyone what people say during the group or at any other Purpose Society programs or activities.

Different groups have different rules. These rules will be explained to you before you join a group.

## **How to Make a Complaint**

If you feel that you, or anyone else receiving service from the Society, has been treated unfairly or if you have concerns about any aspect of the service provided to you, you may make a complaint.

If you have a complaint about the Purpose Society, you should first try to solve the problem with the staff person with whom you have been working. If you are uncomfortable with this or if you are unhappy with the results, you can make a formal complaint. The formal complaint should be made to the Executive Director. Please feel free to talk to the Executive Director or to write a letter or send an e-mail outlining your concerns.

The Executive Director will then have a Program Director look into the issue. The first step will be to talk to the people involved to get information. The Program Director will finish the investigation and give a written report to the Executive Director within four weeks. If more than four weeks is needed to do the investigation, you will be given an explanation in writing as to why extra time is needed.

When the investigation is finished, the Executive Director will give you the results. If you are still not happy with the results, you can meet with the Executive Director. If you are still not happy with the results, you can take your concerns to the Society's Board of Directors.

If you make a complaint, you can still get service from the Society. If you do not want to receive service from the Purpose Society, a staff person will work with you to make a referral to another organization.

## **SUGGESTION FORM**

How can we make the building more friendly and comfortable for you?

What can you tell us so that we can improve our service to you?

How would you like us to do things differently?

What are we doing right?